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ABSTRACT

Transformational leadership, an innovative learning model, grows out of the recognition that the learner's coordinate system is influenced by a variety of time, place, and person variables. The concept of a tetradigm, which graphically illustrates this model, is symbolized by an equilateral triangle within a larger equilateral triangle with the base on the top and the apex at the bottom, thus creating four equal triangles within the perimeter of the model. The tetradigm concept is useful in dealing with highly divergent problem situations in human orgnizations where there are a wide range of values, experience, personalities, and styles of leadership. In forming a human potentiality model for staff development, the tetradigm's central triangle bears the label "development"; the three adjacent triangles represent the concepts of democracy, community, and humanism. The process of transformational leadership begins with the premise of the potentiality tetradigm as a general guide. All stakeholders in the educational organization meet to discuss how they would interpret the interactions of the concepts within the tetradigm and what specific interpretations they would add. It is the democratic participatory nature of the process which moves the whole policy guidance system through its humanistic and community aspects and into the developmental phase as various levels are coordinated; diversity recognized and reconciled; and the goal of development for individuals, group, or community is both internalized and eventually externalized. (JD)

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TOWARD A NEW PARADIGM IN STAFF DEVELOPMENT:

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP*

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TOWARD A NEW PARADIGM IN STAFF DEVELOPMENT:

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Anyone who spends time working on, or investigating reforms in public education quickly develops a sense that there is nothing new. Everything has been tried and the system still seems to compensate for changes or innovations as if the public schools were one vast ocean. So along comes another blue sky drummer proclaiming a miracle cure and the system yawns and adjusts to change as effortlessly as floating on the tide.

Why do I consider transformational leadership any different to the hundreds of other projects, techniques or miracle cures offered over the last five or six decades? First, it does not claim to be the answer in the sense of a worked out solution, but a process to fascilitate regenerative development (Boulding,1978). Second, it requires innovative learning rather than maintenance learning. Third, it is anticipatory and futures oriented. And perhaps most importantly, it is participatory not authoritarian or delegative. So what is this miracle cure? It is not a cure since there is no single answer to questions like how do we improve our test scores?, or how do we finance our schools with property owners rejecting millage increases and renewals combined with reductions in state and federal aid?

Transformational leadership is a <u>process</u> a school organization can use to become a learning system and as such acquire a new competence (Michael,1980). This process will help move school organizations out of the doldrums of "crisis management" with its accompanying entropic effect on the teachers, students and staff which only contributes to increased inefficiency. The promised land as it were, is the new competence of critical issues management and its accompanying innovative learning.

The development of transformational leadership comes out of the variety of changes taking place in natural and social sciences and can be understood in terms of the shift from maintenance learning to innovative learning. An analogous model, or paradigm shift, can be found in science between Newton's mechanistic universe and Einstein's relativistic universe. For 300 years the idea of an ordered clockwork universe prevailed until Einstein explained the various exceptions to the Newtonian model as no longer problems but the answer! Energy and matter where transformational and time was not linear, but relative to the coordinate system of the observer(Zukav,1979). This major paradigm shift in science is only seventy years old and although the physicists and astronomers have rearranged their thinking it has barely influenced the highly insular academic towers of economics, politics and the associated areas of public policy. And of course public education is still burdened with Prussian bureaucracy and an emphasis on print literacy in an age when media and technology are compounding the rate of change exponentially.

The maintenance learning paradigm is a direct throw back to the mechanistic, ordered sequential view of the universe that has prevailed since Newton. And like the Newtonian physics it is appropriate in cetain coordinate systems to explain relationships and how they work. But like the Newtonian model the maintenance learning model is not complete. The innovative learning model grows out of the recognition that the coordinate system of the learner is influenced by a variety of time, place, and person variables. Innovative learning does not reject the mechanistic model, but it humanizes the time sequences and allows the learner democratic participation in learning decisions so that the learner shares control of the learning coordinate system (Swartz,1980).

Adults regard innovative learning as the sine qua non of their entrepreneurial rights; yet, when it comes to the socialized education system for minors adults ignore the child's coordinate learning system and prescribe a mechanistic menu of learning which is supposed to produce literate, curious and creative citizens. When the mechanistic menu fails professionals blame the victums, the parents of the victums and the local community for not supporting the pathology within the public schools. And since the public schools are so prescriptive in learning diagnosis they too fall into the same trap that the medical profession falls into when they prescribe additional drugs for symptoms they have created while prescribing initial drugs to produce a healthy patient. The iatrogenic condition in medicine also applies in education; yet, educational professionals tend to ignore the symptoms because children are moved through chronological grades and given new teachers each year who have little time to consult with former teachers. Of course there are some public and private schools where innovative learning environments are encouraged and where teachers do consult with one another over a variety of learning problems. Thus, the new paradigm is not an unattainable utopia.

But there is a good deal more work to do. One of the paradoxes is that individuals and organizations do not function well under stress; yet, there are times when stressful conditions produce innovations and significant change. A major new contribution to the social-biological sciences is the work of the brilliant Belgian chemist Ilya Prigogine who has modeled how complex organizational systems can actually transform themselves in times of crisis into an even more complex ogranization which has more diversity and

pluralism (Prigogine,1980). The theory of dissipative structures which won the Nobel Prize in 1977 is a major scientific milestone signaling a new paradigm shift for human organizations and the expansion of the science of becoming -- that marvellous creative syntropic potentiality of humans in the natural world governed by the laws of thermodynamics. Prigogine has bridged the physical and social sciences and created a conceptual model that accounts for the potentiality of human innovation overcoming the entropy built into physical systems. In essence human beings are closer to fulfillment of Genisis 3:22-23 "and they shall become like one of us!"

The theory of dissipative structure will be to the social sciences what Einstein's theory of relativity has been to the natural sciences. A major watershed has been reached as the theory explains how the transformation of energy within a complex organization can be random or it can be influenced by fluctuations of a small group and given preferential direction by that group (Prigogine,1980). The concept of preferential direction for organizations raises some interesting questions on the type of leadership and the values assumptions that would act as guides for determining the direction. The analogy of a railroad is useful in that the tracks guide the train to reach its destination, but the people who lay the tracks make value judgements about the route the tracks will follow and where the train will go (Pirsig,1975).

The need to develop a policy guidance system that Pirsig writes about has the potential for becoming the preferential direction of the organizational fluctuations that could be the key to syntropic change that Prigogine has modeled in his theory of dissipative structures. The synthesis is a process model for leadership that will allow for the participation of the principal

stakeholders while at the same time providing some criteria that could be identified as regenerative potentialities.

But before I put the cart before the horse let me specify the type of paradigm, or model, that will be used for the sets within the transformational leadership system. What was needed was a three dimensional model that had insideness and outsideness, a structural integrity and a synergetic quality for the whole system. The perfect model to meet these specifications was the tetrahedron which Buckminster Fuller (1976) defines as the minimal sturctural system in universe. Therefore, rather than use the general term for model I have developed a more specific term for a type of model-- TETRADIGM (Clatworthy,1980). The concept of a tetradigm is symbolized (figure 1) by an equalateral triangle inside a larger equalateral triangle with the base on the top and the appex at the bottom.

figure 1

The tetradigm concept is useful in dealing with highly divergent problem situations in human organizations where there are a wide range of values, experiences, personalities and certainly styles of leadership. The tetradigm is not meant to be complete, but to visualize the varieties of differences that can be discovered within a given concept setting or an organization. For example, the participants tetradigm for a school district could be represented

by the following(figure 2):

figure 2

The classification of participants could be broken down into students, parents, teachers and employees (all other support staff for teachers). A tetradigm (figure 3) for curriculum basics could be represented as the following:

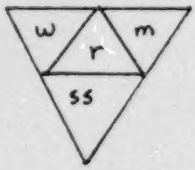


figure 3

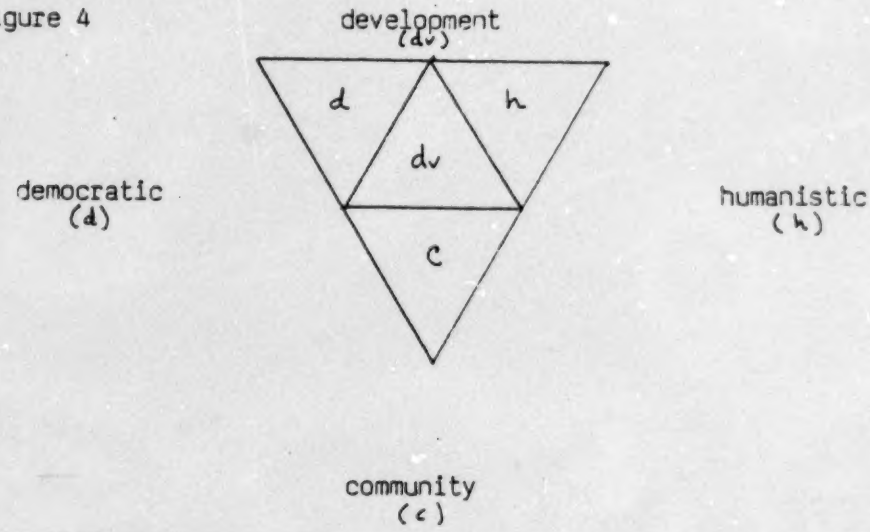
In this tetradigm the"r" represents reading, the "m" represents mathematics, the "w" represents writing and the "ss" represents social studies. Or a process skill approach could be taken in which case the symbols might be the four C's which stand for "consideration", "comprehension", "competence" and "creativity". Yet another way to represent the basics would be through the four fields of knowledge developed by Schumacher(1977) as "I-inner"; "You-inner"; "I-outer"; "You-outer".

What should be evident, however, is that a tetradigm has the capacity to carry all of these definitions for basic curriculum simultaneously and in fact

when they are merged then the basic skill of reading, for example, can be viewed in a much richer and diversified way than just a basal reader like Dick and Jane. What the tetradigm allows is the generation of diverse views and the possibility for making explicit the value assumptions that are implicit in the choices that go into the components of a given tetradigm.

The most controversial tetradigm (figure 4) would be the human potentiality model that would serve as a guide for policy decisions in the sense that the tracks of a railroad guide the train.

figure 4



There is often discussion around the concepts represented in the tetradign, but it is important to remember that the definitional character of each component should be developed by the participants from a general framework that provides for an initial definition by the group. The concept of "democracy", for example, begins with majority rule and the opportunity to participate directly or have representation. This broadens the imput into the

formulation and guards against favoritism or special interests abusing power, and encourages participation. The "humanistic" component insures the rights and responsibilities of personhood as guaranteed under the Declaration of Independence and the Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. It also connotes the freedom and responsibility of self-regulation so long as force and fraud are not perpetuated on others. The definition of "humanistic" also champions the protection of individuals, free enterprise and encourages entrepreneurship which is not detrimental to the other criteria. The definition of "community" implies the cooperativeness on the part of individuals and organizations necessary for an harassment free physical and social environment. The definiton also considers cooperativeness as a quality dimension and the degree necessary to achieve it on levels where groups of individuals are involved. And finally, the definition of "development" covers the area of beneficial growth for individuals and organizations. It connotes the discussion and improvement of quality in either physical or metaphysical areas, or both. Some examples of a metaphysical development might be the improvement in personality through a human interaction workshop; the spiritual development of a person through religious confirmation, conversion, or rebirth; or the reduction of stress symptoms through meditation or biofeedback techniques. In the physical sense the concept implies growth which is not detrimental to individuals, communities, or the biosphere vital to our healthy continuence on board spaceship Earth

The process of transformational leadership would begin with the premise of the potentiality tetradigm (figure 4) as a general guide, or a policy heuristic (Boguslaw,1965), and as a concept paper for participants to

discuss. All stakeholders in the educational organization, for example, would meet to discuss how they would interpret the interactions of the concepts within the tetradigm and what specific definitions they would add, or what new tetradigms they would propose. Once the various groups had considered the definitions for the concepts in the tetradigm in terms of their own roles, then representative joint meetings could be worked out to clarify differences and begin work to develop an organizational policy guidance system using a tetradigm . Involvement with developing the tetradigm would probably be different in elementary grades than in middle schools, junior highs, or senior high schools. For example, some teachers at the senior high level might want to meet with their classes and work out how the criteria in the tetradigm would apply to the student's responsibilities with the course and the classroom-school environment. In other instances, departments might want to set up meetings with representatives selected by students to work out how the criteria could be used to guide the department's curriculum and student grievance policy. At the elementary level, teachers could work with their classes, or groups of classes could be represented by lower and upper school units the could coordinate policy for the whole school. It is expected that differences would develop between first grade and sixth grade, but those differences would be encouraged so long as the general guidance system was not discarded. Students would be taught social responsibility by participating in a continuing exercise of citizenship. At all levels differences would stimulate discussion and to a certain extent cooperative competition as distinct from traditional competition based on zero-sum game theory (Thurow,1980). Quality would also be enhanced since it would become a major

focus in both community and development considerations, as well as a part of the discussion for improvement in democratic and humanistic conditions.

It is the democratic participatory nature of the process which moves the whole policy guidance system through its humanistic and community aspects and into the develpment phase as levels are coordinated, diversity recognized and the goal of development for individual, group or community is both internalized and eventually externalized. The participatory nature of the process would greatly reduce the hypocracy of school environments that all to often preach responsibility, but do not teach it through facilitating real experiences with the uses and abuses of power (Kotter,1978). The community wants adolescents to be serious about preparing for the responsibilities of adult citiizenship; yet schools give students very little tangible experience with decision making that affects their working and social environments. The same is often true for teachers who work in organizations that are top heavy with administrators and operating on a crisis management strategy from week to week.

The process of transformational leadership is not a controlled process in the sense that is directed, or even initiated, by the central administration. This is one reason it may never see the light of day, but it is a process that can be used with a 'Quality of Work Life' program (Rosow,1981) or a School Improvement or Educational Improvement program (Klausmeir,1982). The process could also be used in conjunction with developmental evaluation or as the UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation and the Laboratory in School and Community Education calls "Contexual Appraisal System"(Sirotnik,1981 and Goodlad,1979).

If school organizations want to improve, if staff are distressed or even dispondent from both the economic and academic declines than what better place

to start than with the potentiality tetradigm concept used as an inquiry guide for a holistic evaluation or as Pariett(1972) called it "Illuminative Evaluation". Who initiates the process? It is not important if the initiation comes from a student, teacher, custiodian, school board member, parent, principal or administrator. What is important is that the stakeholders in the organizational setting be involved so that in both the evaluative and developmental stages there is a value heuristic that allows for entrepreneurial efforts, diversity, and the flexibility to take advantage of more creative, innovative and right brain oriented perceptions of problems and strategies for improvement (Sternberg,1982).

In the problems of the schools exists the possibilities for change and positive growth. It is a paradox that the crisis of education may turn out to generate the necessary transformation. Educators need only allow themselves to learn and then take that process one step farther and help the organization to learn. Transformational leadership is a challange to continue the learning process and humanize our educational organizations and contribute to the quality of life for both people and communities. As Teilhard de Chardin once wrote:

> Today something is happening
> to the structure of human concsciousness.
> A fresh kind of life is starting.

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